

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-16

NEW YORK TIMES
26 NOVEMBER 1981

Defendant Describes Shooting of Libyan Dissident

FORT COLLINS, Colo., Nov. 25 (UPI) — Eugene Tafoya testified today that he went to the apartment of a dissident Libyan student last year believing that he was delivering a message from the Central Intelligence Agency, and shot the Libyan in self-defense.

The 47-year-old defendant, who is charged with attempted murder and conspiracy, said that while he was working for the intelligence agency he primarily took orders from Edwin P. Wilson, a former C.I.A. agent now living in Libya. Mr. Tafoya also said he did some "spying" and carried information for Mr. Wilson throughout Europe and North Africa.

The intelligence agency has denied that Mr. Tafoya was ever an employee of the agency.

Mr. Wilson and Francis Terpil, another former C.I.A. agent, were indicted last year in Washington on charges of conspiracy to commit murder and illegally shipping explosives and munitions to Libya.

Described as a Hired Killer

Mr. Tafoya was called to the stand by his attorneys to rebut prosecution charges that he was hired to kill Faisal Zagallai, an opponent of Muammar el-Qaddafi, the Libyan leader.

Mr. Zagallai, then a graduate student at Colorado State University here, was shot twice in his apartment on Oct. 14, 1980. The bullets struck him in the head, and he lost sight in one eye as a result of the wounds.

Mr. Tafoya, of Truth or Consequences, N.M., testified that he applied for a job with the C.I.A. in 1976 shortly after his discharge from the Army's Special Forces. He said he did not hear anything until 1979, when he met with two men who showed him credentials

from the intelligence agency.

One of the men, whom he said he knew only as "John," later called and told him to go to Libya, Mr. Tafoya said.

He testified that he never trained troops, but did vehicle maintenance and carried "papers" for Mr. Wilson to London, Paris, Zurich, Rome, Geneva, Malta and Tunisia. Mr. Tafoya also said he reported to "John," rather than to Mr. Wilson, but added that he was paid by both men.

In September 1980, Mr. Tafoya said, he received a message in London from John that Mr. Zagallai was involved in "upsetting détente between Egypt and Israel by making broadcasts and preparation of other propaganda."

Mr. Tafoya said he later received a call from John, telling him to get in touch with Mr. Zagallai in Fort Collins and tell him "to knock off the broadcast or whatever he was doing."

The defendant said that when he went to the Libyan's apartment, he wore a .22-caliber pistol in a holster. "Now that I look back on it, it was really stupid," Mr. Tafoya said. "But being that narcotics were involved and possible weapons, I thought it was the thing to do."

Mr. Tafoya said he chatted with Mr. Zagallai for 10 minutes, then told him: "You have been making and preparing broadcasts to the Middle East about things that are upsetting détente."

"He got the message and just erupted," Mr. Tafoya continued. "He started yelling and everything broke loose before I finished. He was yelling in Arabic. I tried to calm him down but he just kept yelling, and I heard glass breaking and his wife yelling in another room."

Mr. Tafoya said he saw Mr. Zagallai pull a pistol out from under a cushion of the couch. They struggled, Mr. Tafoya said, then his gun went off and the Libyan fell to the floor.